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News of the Rocky Mountain Region



DANTZLER CHECKS HUNGRY HORSES—Rocky Mountain Regional Director Frantz Dantzler checks part of a herd of horses near Denver that was neglected during severe winter weather. Dantzler had local law enforcement official warn the owner that cruelty charges would be brought against him unless he gave horses proper care.

From the Director's Desk

Horses No Longer Esteemed

By Frantz L. Dantzler
Director, HSUS Rocky Mountain Region

The recent wave of horse abuse cases in the Rocky Mountain area point to the need for a change of attitude among many animal owners. The West, where a horse was once so valued a person could be hanged for horse stealing, seems to have changed with the times.

Complaints of starving horses are now commonplace. Severe winter weather is a common excuse we frequently hear, yet, ironically, some of the most serious cases of abuse have occurred in areas where the weather has been normal or below normal.

Economics has played a part to some extent, since in some areas good hay is costing as much as \$60 per ton. A sustaining diet for an average horse is normally about 12 lbs. per day. An owner of several hundred animals can and should expect to pay a high cost for properly main-

taining the animals during the winter months.

However, horses haven't changed, the weather hasn't changed, but perhaps people have. Today, horses are rarely used as work animals, because they have been largely replaced by mechanization. With the exception of purebred animals, the horse has become rather inexpensive initially.

In some cases "profiteers" have bought large herds of animals for use in riding stables for tourists during the summer season. All too frequently the animals are turned out to fend for themselves during the winter, usually in a remote barren

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Colorado Needs Law To Impound Horses

A long-standing Colorado law providing for the impoundment of animals after cruelty complaints are filed was termed unconstitutional by a U.S. District Court last autumn. Since then, law enforcement officials have been reluctant to provide emergency care and treatment for animals involved in cruelty cases.

Reached Crisis

Because of the severe winter this year, the problem has reached crisis proportions. In two cases alone, a total of 1,150 horses were trapped between an ineffective law and cruel treatment by their owners.

In one of the cases, Denver riding stable owner E. F. Allen was charged with cruelty to animals after several dead horses were found in a barren snow-covered field. Allen later pleaded guilty to the charge and was fined \$750, but the horses were left in his custody until his case was heard.

Neglected 650 Horses

In the other case, Pat Mantle of Steamboat Springs, Colo., was charged with neglecting 650 riding horses that he kept at Craig, Colo. The horses were found without food in snow-covered fields, with several horses dead. Mantle pleaded not guilty to a charge of cruelty, and the horses remain in his care because of an inadequate law.

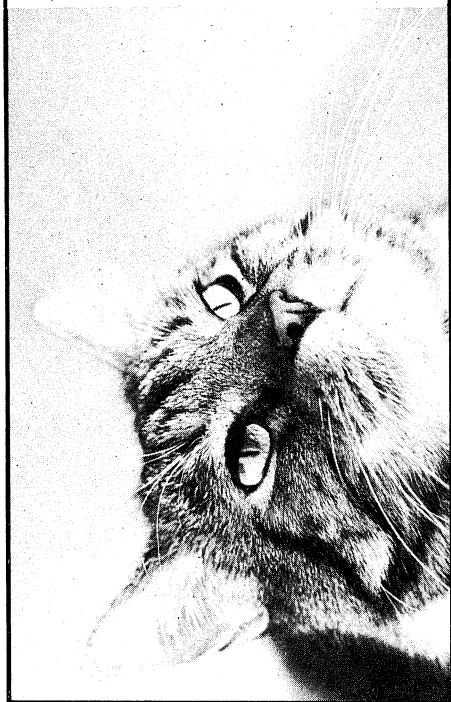
To correct this bad situation, Colorado State Sen. Ted Strickland, a dedicated humanitarian, introduced a bill (#76) aimed at answering the court's criticism of the existing law (i.e., that "due process" was not provided for).

At Strickland's invitation, HSUS Rocky Mountain Regional Director Frantz Dantzler testified before the Senate Agriculture Committee on the need for this bill. The bill would provide impoundment authority in

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Promote Pet Care

The HSUS Rocky Mountain Regional Office has a variety of literature available to help you promote better care of pets and other animals. Write for spay posters, pet care brochures, literature on spaying, and KIND materials for youth.



IMPOUNDMENT *Continued*

cruelty cases involving any species of animal, including livestock.

It is important that all Colorado humanitarians express their feelings about this bill to their legislators, Dantzler believes. "Without such authority, we are helpless to save animals from insensitive owners."

DIRECTOR'S DESK *Continued*

area. Some "dude string" operators actually anticipate a certain loss percentage between fall and spring because it is cheaper to replace the animal than to feed it.

Perhaps the Greek philosopher Aristotle had this unfortunate attitude in mind when he wrote "that which is common to the greatest number has the least care bestowed upon it."

The Humane Society of the United States

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